

Moving Forward

A newsletter for those in pain.
September 2007



Do You Treat Your Car Better Than Yourself? Ignore Pain at Your Own Peril

People have many ways of coping with pain, and one that I see frequently is to ignore it. We ignore pain at our own peril. Let me explain.

The Purpose of Pain:

- Protect
- Motivate to move differently

Ignoring these alerts is not a good idea. What would happen if you treated your car this way when the temperature light comes on?

Option 1

Remove the warning bulb. The alert goes away but the problem remains.

This is similar to distracting yourself from pain.

Option 2

Ignore the light..

It stays on, the problem remains, but you keep driving. This is akin to moving despite the pain. You keep getting things done, but the problem is not resolved.

Option 3

Find the cause for the light and resolve the problem.

The long term solution is to resolve the problem causing the warning, not the effects.

Option 3 is obviously the best choice but how do you determine the problem? See below.



Clinical Example:

Shoulder Pain

Shoulder pain is one of the most common problems that I see in my clinic. The location of the pain can vary from being localized or widespread and radiating.

It often worsens with specific directions such as reaching overhead or behind the back, or with specific types of movement such as repetitive motion, or during certain times of the day such as first thing in the morning, or at the end of the day.

Commonly, the movement of the neck, shoulder blade, mid back, and even the lower body become involved in protecting the sensitive structures and triggering pain.

Common diagnoses include impingement syndrome, rotator cuff strain, tendonitis, bursitis, frozen shoulder, thoracic outlet syndrome, and even may cause headaches, neck pain, radiating pain, etc.

Do you hurt when you move? Problem: Mechanical Pain

Signs: Pain which changes with movement or positioning

Examples: Bending over, reaching overhead, sitting, standing, walking, stairs, gripping, repetitive movements, are but a few.

Origin: Sensitive Nervous System.

Effects: Altered movement patterns and posture, spasms, decreased flexibility, tender to touch, loss of strength, cold, labored movement.

Treatment: Decrease neural sensitivity, restore unguarded movement, improve tolerance to activity

*treatment should be gentle and subtle and you should NEVER have to take on a "no pain, no gain" attitude.



"Physical Therapists are the movement specialists. Since mechanical pain is a movement problem there is no one better suited to help than a physical therapist who is knowledgeable in pain."

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